Production and procurement of potatoes

†2086. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that production of potatoes is continuously increasing in the country for last decade;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that alongwith the increase in the production of potatoes, its cost of production is also increasing;

(c) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that due to non-availability of proper arrangement for marketing of potatoes, the potato growers are facing financial crises?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The potato production in the country has increased from 16.38 Million Tonnes during 1991-92 to 24.08 Million Tonnes in the year 2001-02.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The cost of production is increasing with increase in cost of inputs, labour and also with adoption of improved technologies of production. As per estimates of Indian Council of Agriculture Research cost of production of table potato has increased from Rs. 105/ quintal during 2000-01 to Rs. 150/ quintal during 2001-02.

(d) No, Sir. In order to provide remunerative prices to the farmers, the Government of India, on the request of States concerned, provide financial assistance through Market Intervention Scheme. During 2002-03 the Market Intervention scheme has been implemented in the States of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal where, under the scheme, potato has been procured from farmers @ Rs. 190/quintal and Rs. 200/quintal respectively.

Besides, with a view to create new outlets for utilizing the surplus potato production, the Government of Uttar Pradesh is providing assistance for transport of potato outside the State @ Rs. 250 per tonne.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The Government is implementing a scheme on "Capital Investment Subsidy for Construction/Expansion/Modernization of cold storages of horticulture produce". An additional storage capacity of 31.79 lakh tonnes in 716 cold storages has been created in the country through the scheme.

Post production loss in agriculture sector

†2087. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 25 percent of post production crop is assessed to be lost in agriculture sector of the country;

(b) if not, facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that such loss could be minimized with the use of advanced technology; and

(d) if so, facts in this regard and how it compares with loss in agriculture sector at international level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) A Committee headed by Dr. V.G. Panse, in its report submitted in 1968, had estimated annual post harvest losses in the foodgrains in various stages at 9.33%. These included losses during threshing (1.68%), transportation (0.15%), processing (0.92%), rodents (2.50%), birds (0.85), insects (2.55%) and moisture (0.68%). A survey conducted by Directorate of Marketing and inspection, during 1973-74, had estimated post harvest losses in foodgrains to be about 5% out of which the storages losses were estimated at about 2.7%. A Joint survey conducted by the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute and Indian Grain Storage Management and Research Institute during 1985—88 in Bulandshahar district of Uttar Pradesh and estimated total foodgrains losses at about 4.12% due to different factors at various post harvest stages. Losses during storage and transit of foodgrains in the organized sector is however, less than 0.5% and 1.5% respectively.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.